

# Oregon Housing and Community Services



## 2023-35 Agency Requests: Improving Oregon's social safety net with Training, Technical Assistance, and Language Access investments

Response to the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the need to improve community organizations' ability to deliver needed assistance to Oregonians of different backgrounds from across the state. OHCS is requesting nearly \$20 million to enhance the translation of program information and expand partnerships with community-based organizations and Tribal entities to address Oregon's housing crisis effectively. These resources will increase our ability to support these organizations and develop and fund language access needs, training opportunities, and technical assistance.

### Training & Technical Assistance - \$17.85 million, General Fund

Capacity building investments will support the development of long last organizational strategies, systems, and structures in order to increase in readiness to receive OHCS resources for culturally specific and/or rural serving organizations. This investment includes four strategies.

- OHCS will provide grants to support:
  - Grant writing skill building to expand knowledge of fiscal and contracting requirements, reporting, ongoing fund management, bookkeeping strategies for multiple government grants, etc.
  - Equity and racial justice training, including community engagement, language access.
  - General nonprofit organizational capacity building to allow for strategic planning, succession planning, data collection and analysis, etc.
- Direct allocation to the nine federally recognized Tribes to honor Tribal self-determination and to support maximum participation and collaboration
- Multi-year grants contracts to support building the organizational infrastructure and capacity of organizations led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/x, Asian American and Pacific Islander people, and/or rural and very rural serving organizations. This would include specific educational opportunities and learning cohorts.
- Through a third party, identify and address internal capacity barriers to supporting small community providers.

Oregon's Statewide Housing Plan called for centering racial justice and changing the way we do business in rural communities. OHCS has made progress where we can, and legislative investments are needed to realize the goals of this current Plan.

## Language Access - \$1.7 million, General Fund

For the agency to provide language access tools across all divisions, this investment will support multiple activities:

- Develop and fund contracts with translation and interpretation services and culturally specific organizations to review and assess existing practices
- Update the Limited English Proficiency data and agency plan
- Develop and implement an agencywide American Sign Language (ASL) policy to improve access to Housing Stability Council or other meetings
- Develop procedures that lead to greater confidence in compliance with federal requirements and recognized best practices

## Listening to Service Providers and Community Leaders

OHCS heard from organizations to help refine this investment. This included a listening session focused on Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian-American, and Pacific Islander-led and serving organizations, a Spanish-speaking listening session, an opportunity to hear from the Affordable Housing Industry Anti-Racism Collaborative, conversations with rural elected officials, webinars, and a survey. OHCS also engaged with the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes and leaders.

Want to know more about our full Agency Request Budget? Review [OHCS' 2023 DRAFT Legislative Agenda memo](#) or visit the [OHCS Government Relations website](#).